

**Introduction:** It is hard to find someone who is a good listener. Few people have the openness and the time to listen carefully and to seek to fully understand what another person is thinking and feeling. This is because we are all different and it is not easy to think and feel like another person. Many times when we do understand who the other person is and what she or he wants from us, it is often something we are uncomfortable doing. \*\*\* Sometimes, because Christians have The Holy Spirit OF Jesus, their Savior IN them, they are better listeners and more able to understand the needs of another person and to act to help – even when it is uncomfortable. \*\*\* When it comes to listening to God and doing all He says, only Christians can listen to and obey Him in faith. As we heard about Moses recently, often God’s people are reluctant to do what He calls them to do. \*\*\* But, more than any person in The Bible, the boy raised in God’s Tabernacle and mentored by God’s priest, Samuel, responded to God’s call quickly and grew in his service to The Covenant God. \*\*\* It may be Samuel was about thirteen years old when he first heard the voice of Yahweh from The Ark of The Covenant. At this age, the age Ishmael was circumcised (Genesis 17:23-27), Israelite males reached their second milestone on the road of a life of service to Yahweh. \*\*\* Let’s look into God’s Word to see how Jesus is present in what happened to Samuel about eleven hundred years before Bethlehem.

**I. The Word of Yahweh was not spread abroad when Samuel was a boy sleeping near His Presence, but one night Yahweh calls him three times.** (*1 Samuel 3:1-9*)

A. The Word of Yahweh was precious when Samuel was a boy ministering to Him and sleeping near the Ark of God. (*1 Samuel 3:1-3*)

1. The boy Samuel is ministering to Yahweh under Eli, the Word of Yahweh was precious in those days, no visions breaking through. (*Verse 1*)

**Boy ministering:** The word describing Samuel was applied to Moses at three months old and Joseph at age seventeen. Some commentators put Samuel at about six years old. He is serving Yahweh under the supervision of Eli (ascension).

**Word precious:** The Word was precious because, as was typical in the ‘roller coaster’ days of the judges, God had not spoken to His people in a long time.

**Visions not abroad:** God often withholds both words and visions when His people are unfaithful to Him through idols.

2. When Eli was lying down, his eyes had begun to grow dark not to see; and, the lamp of God was not quenched and Samuel is lying down in Yahweh’s ‘temple’: there the Ark of God. (*Verses 2-3*)

**Eli’s eyes:** Eli’s eyes were fading with age and his eyes were growing dim and would soon be dark.

**Samuel and Ark:** The ‘temple’ was not yet built. Samuel is in the dwelling place, or palace, of the Great King, and the Ark is His Presence with His people. Samuel is close to God.

B. One night Yahweh called Samuel three times; then, Eli told Samuel if he calls to thee, thou will say, ‘Speak Yahweh, Thy servant is listening’. (*1 Samuel 3:4-9*)

1. Then Yahweh called to Samuel ... then he ran to Eli and said, ‘Behold me! you called me’; but, he said, ‘I did not call. You must return, you must lie down’, so he went and he laid down. (*Verses 4-5*)

**Open response to call:** Samuel is quick to respond to the voice he heard calling him.

**Confusion:** He assumed Eli called him, but Eli did not.

2. Then Yahweh added to call again, ‘Samuel’, then Samuel rose and went to Eli and said, ‘Behold me! thou called me’; but, he said, ‘I did not call, my son; thou must return, thou must lie down’. (*Verse 6*)

**Similar second call:** This time Yahweh calls Samuel by name and Eli calls him his son, and the narrator does not record Samuel’s return – minor details.

3. Samuel did not yet know Yahweh, and it had not yet been revealed to him The Word of Yahweh. (*Verse 7*)

**Explanation:** The Holy Spirit adds this detail to let us know Samuel, like the rest of Israel, did not have an experiential knowledge of Yahweh or His Word.

4. Then Yahweh added to call Samuel the third time, and Samuel did as before; then, Eli understood that Yahweh was calling the boy-child. (*Verse 8*)

**Eli understands:** Eli knew enough of Yahweh, from what was handed down to him, to understand.

**‘Triple narrative’:** Many times in the stories of Scripture, God gives a triple repetition where the third time results in a deeper revelation of Himself and His plan. Think of Peter and Jesus, and the revelation Peter will be crucified (John 21:15-19; Mark 2:5-12; Matthew 25:19-30).

5. Eli said to Samuel, ‘You must go, you must lie down; if He calls, then say “Speak, Yahweh, because Thy servant is hearing”.’; then Samuel went and laid down in his place. (*Verse 9*)

**Eli’s good advice:** Eli commands Samuel to ask The Covenant God of Israel to speak and then to listen to him.

**II. Yahweh then charges a listening Samuel to tell Eli that he and his sons will be judged; with some reluctance Samuel obeys and he grows into a confirmed prophet: a type of Jesus.** (*1 Samuel 3:10-21 & John 20:21-23*)

A. Then Yahweh came and stood, calling Samuel who responded he is a hearing servant and Yahweh said He will judge Eli and his sons for their iniquity. (*1 Samuel 3:10-14*)

1. Then Yahweh came, stood and called as at other times, ‘Samuel, Samuel’; then Samuel said, ‘Thou must speak because Thy servant is hearing’. (*Verse 10*)

**Name twice:** This time, the fourth time, Samuel is called by name twice.

**Openness:** Samuel’s response is total openness to Yahweh. He declares he is ‘all ears’.

**Unprecedented:** Recently we heard Moses raise four objections to his being called by God. Gideon and most people called by God doubted and protested. Not Samuel!

2. Yahweh said, 'Behold! I am doing a thing which the two ears of all hearing shall tingle; I will perform against Eli all I have spoken concerning his house: from beginning to end'. (*Verses 11-12*)  
**Word fulfilled:** The essence of Yahweh's warnings to Eli and his sons that will now be fulfilled preceded this (1 Samuel 2:12-36).
3. 'I am indeed about to punish his house forever for the iniquity which he knew that his sons were blaspheming and he did not restrain them; therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of his family shall not be "covered over" forever'. (*Verses 13-14*)

**Judge iniquity:** The duration and degree of their blasphemous idolatry must now be judged.

**NO repentance:** People can so rebel against God that repentance to life is not possible (Hebrews 6:4-6; 1 John 5:16-17).

- B. In the morning Samuel was afraid to tell Eli, then Eli insisted that Samuel tell him everything, then Eli responds in resignation. (*1 Samuel 3:15-18*)

1. Samuel laid down until morning, then he opened the doors and was afraid to tell the vision to Eli; and then Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son', and he said, 'Behold me!'. (*Verses 15-16*)

**Samuel afraid:** This is the second time Eli has expressed affection to Samuel, and he is afraid to give his father-mentor the bad news God has called him to speak.

### **God calls Samuel to speak for Him**

**Eli calls Samuel:** But, Eli calls Samuel, and Samuel responds that he is fully present.

2. Then he (Eli) said, 'What was it He told to you? Do not hide it from me. Thus may God do to you, and so add, if you hide anything of all He said to you'. (*Verse 17*)

**Do not hide God's Word:** Even though Eli suspects The Word of God may be against him and his house (sons), he wants to know all God is speaking through Samuel.

### **God calls Samuel to speak for Him**

3. Then Samuel declared to him everything, and hid nothing; then he (Eli) said, 'It is Yahweh. The good in His eyes, He will do'. (*Verse 18*)

**Samuel tells all:** Samuel fully obeys and says all God told him to speak.

**Eli resigned:** Eli now realizes that he and his sons have failed God and deserve His judgment.

He knows he has no choice but to resign himself to what God called four times to Samuel to speak.

### **God calls Samuel to speak for Him**

- C. Samuel grew strong and Yahweh was with him giving words so all Israel knew he was confirmed as a prophet; and so is a type of Messiah Jesus. (*1 Samuel 3:19-21; John 20:21-23*)

1. Then Samuel grew and Yahweh was with him, and he did not let any of His words fall to the ground. (*1 Samuel 3:19*)

**Samuel grew in Yahweh:** It seems The Holy Spirit inspired Luke to pick up on these words about Samuel and apply them (and more) to Jesus (Luke 2:51-52). But here we have confirmation that Samuel grew in response to God's call.

### **God calls Samuel to speak for Him**

2. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-Sheba (well of seven-fold oath) knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of Yahweh. (*1 Samuel 3:20*)

**Israel knew him established:** He was confirmed as faithful to Yahweh God, and everyone from the northernmost to southernmost parts of Israel knew this.

3. And again Yahweh appeared at Shiloh, for Yahweh revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh by His Word. (*1 Samuel 3:21*)

**Shiloh:** Shiloh means 'until he comes to his own'. Ezekiel prophesied that the ruin of Israel would not be restored until he comes to whom it rightfully belongs (21:27). So the name of Samuel's home base is prophetic of The Messiah.

4. Then Jesus said to them (His disciples) again, 'Peace unto you all, as The Father has sent Me, even I am emphatically sending you all'. (*John 20:21*)

**Jesus calls and sends:** Jesus is both calling and sending the Eleven.

5. Having said this, He breathed on them and is saying to them, 'You all must receive The Holy Spirit; if those you may forgive their sins, they have been forgiven to them; if those you all are holding fast, they have been held fast. (*John 20:22-23*)

**Sent in The Spirit:** Jesus sends them out full of The Holy Spirit to give them discernment.

**Forgive:** They will fulfill Jesus commission to them to forgive the sins of some people.

### **Jesus' disciples are sent to forgive others**

**As discerned:** But, they will also be able to spiritually discern those whose sins cannot be forgiven, such as Eli and his sons. Because of human sympathy, this is a difficult charge and can bring sadness, just as it did to young Samuel; and, Jesus was a suffering servant and a man of sorrows (Isaiah 55:3).

**Application:** We must seek to continually grow IN Christ, who sends His disciples out to both forgive and not forgive in the discernment of His Holy Spirit. And, we must do this in an attitude of love, even as we are fearing God.

It's ALL about God – His grace and LOVE and how we respond to Him.

**Conclusion:** After years of silence, The Covenant God called Samuel who was raised in His Presence. Samuel listened and obeyed Yahweh to tell his mentor a strong message of judgment. After this, he faithfully gave Israel every word God gave him as he grew in Yahweh to become a type of Jesus Christ. And, we need to be Jesus to all people in our world.

### **God calls Samuel to speak for Him**